

SPC/Inshore Fish. Res./BP.74
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ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

WORKSHOP ON PACIFIC INSHORE FISHERY RESOURCES
(Noumea, New Caledonia, 14-25 March 1988)

COUNTRY STATEMENT - VANUATU

General

Prior to independence, local fisheries were limited to reef fishing for subsistence purposes, irregular operations to meet the limited but increasing demand for deep bottom fish in the urban markets of Port Vila and Luganville, village level harvesting of trochus and green snails for local button manufacture and export.

Fisheries Department research activities have been focused on:

- research to determine the resources available to coastal fisheries (and to a lesser extent oceanic fisheries), to improve fishing techniques and to investigate certain aquaculture methods
- closely monitor catches and if necessary, revise estimates of the maximum sustainable yield for deep bottom fish species

Existing Resources

1. Resources along the outer reef slopes

- i) deep sea bottom - dwelling fish
- ii) deep sea prawn
- iii) nautilus
- iv) fishing method - other proven method to improve production. it is also necessary examine selectivity of fishing gear for management purposes.

2. Coastal resources

- i) fish
- ii) trochus, giant clams, green snail, beche de mer
- iii) mangrove areas and rear mangrove locations with aquaculture possibility

3. Other resources

- i) coconut crab
- ii) fresh water resources

Research Programmes

A number of research operation have been undertaken since the Fisheries Department was set up in 1979.

Deep Bottom Fish

The Fisheries Department has work closely with ORSTOM and the SPC on a number of research projects directed at the assessment of deep bottom fish resources. The information now available on these is amongst the best of any of the island nations of the South Pacific and has already been use to establish estimated MSYs of deep bottom fish for the different island areas of Vanuatu.

Other research activities so far under taken, or are currently underway, have included studies of the availability of deep water prawns, of the growth rate of trochus and of the population dynamics of the coconut crab (*Birgus latro*).

Aquaculture

Attempts by the private sector prior to 1982 to culture oysters and to develop a small scale shrimp farm on Efate were unsuccessful. Experiments on artificial culture of trochus, however, have shown this to be feasible and the Department is now investigating methods of producing juvenile trochus for the experimental re-seeding of selected areas of over-exploited reef